



BA Thesis | South and Southeast Asian Studies

# The Act of Return

Return of the Cultural Treasures From  
the Netherlands to Indonesia between  
Independence and present days

Olesja Rubene | s1369113

Leiden University – Faculty of Humanities  
Supervisor: Prof.dr. Marijke J. Klokke

5 August 2021  
Word count: 10,092

# CONTENTS

CHAPTER I   INTRODUCTION .....	3
CHAPTER II   THE PRAJNAPARAMITA STATUE .....	8
CHAPTER III   THE COLLECTION OF MUSEUM NUSANTARA.....	14
CHAPTER IV   THE KRIS OF DIPONEGORO .....	22
CHAPTER V   RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE NETHERLANDS.....	28
CHAPTER VI   CONCLUSION .....	33
BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	37

Heritage is about negotiation – about using the past to negotiate new ways of being and expressing identity.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Laurajane Smith, *Uses of Heritage*. (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), 4.

## CHAPTER I | INTRODUCTION

The debate of restitution and the return of cultural treasures has been a hot topic in international media in recent years. France, Germany, the Netherlands and most recently, Belgium are the European countries that are trying to address these challenging questions from a different perspective. Undoubtedly, the return of cultural heritage is a complex and emotionally loaded subject for all the parties involved. For instance, in 2020 Congolese activist Mwazulu Diyabanza Siwa Lemba and his 'comrades' from the organization Unité Dignité Courage (UDC)<sup>2</sup> took these matters literally in their own hands. They attempted to 'restitute' objects from three French museums: a museum in Marseille, Quai Branly, and Louvre in Paris, as well as from Afrika Museum in Bergen Dal, the Netherlands.<sup>3</sup> From Afrika museum, Mwazulu Diyabanza took a wooden statue<sup>4</sup> and live-streamed this attempt on the internet.<sup>5</sup> Later, in 2021, he was charged by a court of Nijmegen.<sup>6</sup> He has more pending court cases in France regarding the same acts of vigilantism. While for 'outsiders' this is an act of crime and an attempt of theft, UDC sees it as a noble deed of taking back what was 'stolen' from Africa by colonialists. The organization frames it as an act of 'free speech'.<sup>7</sup> News outlets semi-ironically labeled the Congolese activist 'the Robin Hood of the restitution'.<sup>8</sup>

Currently, such acts of *robin-hoodism* are uncommon. Usually, they are more of political/staged outcries to draw attention to the existing problem rather than a real threat to museums. However, given the currently electrified socio-political climate, especially charged by the movements such as Black Lives Matter<sup>9</sup>, coinciding with the global Covid-19 crisis, it will not take long for such isolated events to explode into plunder, violence and pogroms if the ground is

---

<sup>2</sup><https://nltimes.nl/2020/09/28/activist-removed-statue-dutch-museum-tireless-pursuit-stolen-african-art> (Accessed 1 July 2021).

<sup>3</sup><https://www.volkskrant.nl/nieuws-achtergrond/mwazulu-de-robin-hood-van-roofkunst-uit-afrika-geeft-de-strijd-tegen-de-koloniale-staten-niet-op-b6e37ef5/> (Accessed 1 July 2021).

<sup>4</sup><https://nltimes.nl/2020/09/11/activists-held-taking-african-statue-museum-colonialism-protest> (Accessed 1 July 2021).

<sup>5</sup><https://youtu.be/Pnj34Cp-UUw> (Accessed 1 July 2021).

<sup>6</sup><https://www.dutchnews.nl/news/2021/01/colonial-art-protesters-charged-with-attempted-theft-of-statue-in-court/> (Accessed 1 July 2021).

<sup>7</sup><https://news.artnet.com/art-world/marseille-mwazulu-diyabanza-1924953> (Accessed 1 July 2021).

<sup>8</sup><https://www.volkskrant.nl/nieuws-achtergrond/mwazulu-de-robin-hood-van-roofkunst-uit-afrika-geeft-de-strijd-tegen-de-koloniale-staten-niet-op-b6e37ef5/> (Accessed 1 July 2021).

<sup>9</sup><https://www.theartnewspaper.com/analysis/demands-to-restitute-artefacts-plundered-from-africa-blm> (Accessed 1 July 2021).

fertile. Therefore, governments need to act fast to avoid such acts of ‘noble vigilantism’ and prevent them from escalating.

Already from the 1970’s influential scholars such as Edward Said (1978), Arjun Appadurai (1987), and David Lowenthal (1996) criticized the Western-centric perspective and ‘othering’, when it came to discourses in history, art and heritage. However, this kind of scholarly criticism did not stop the global West from producing documents such as 2002 Declaration on the Importance and Value of Universal Museums (DIVUM), signed by the 18 major Western museums, including Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam. DIVUM stated that ‘over time, objects so acquired - whether by purchase, gift, or partage - have become part of the museums that have cared for them, and by extension, part of the heritage of the nations which house them.’<sup>10</sup> Moreover, the Declaration argued that such prized and heavily disputed objects as the Elgin Marbles and the Pergamon Altar should remain in the European museums because ‘the universal admiration for ancient civilizations would not be so deeply established today were it not for the influence exercised by the artifacts of these cultures, widely available to an international public in major museums.’<sup>11</sup>

After such declarations, it comes as no surprise when activists feel an urge to take matters in their own hands to redress the colonial past.

Moreover, as it frequently happens, the ‘elitist’ academic discourse does not penetrate the everyday debates until something ‘sensational’ happens. In case of restitution, this sensational event was President Macron’s speech at the University of Ouagadougou in Burkina Faso in 2017. The President announced that he wants “the conditions to be met for the temporary or permanent restitution of African heritage to Africa.”<sup>12</sup> In 2018, the French President commissioned a report on this matter, which was written by French art historian Bénédicte Savoy and Senegalese academic Felwine Sarr. The Sarr-Savoy report recommended the permanent repatriation of African heritage looted during the colonial era.<sup>13</sup> Such a conclusion was unprecedented - it was believed that the report would have far-reaching implications for museums and cultural policies in France and on the international level. However, despite all the expectations, a

---

<sup>10</sup> [https://www.hermitagemuseum.org/wps/portal/hermitage/news/news-item/news/1999\\_2013/hm11\\_1\\_93/?lng=](https://www.hermitagemuseum.org/wps/portal/hermitage/news/news-item/news/1999_2013/hm11_1_93/?lng=) (Accessed 1 July 2021).

<sup>11</sup> [https://www.hermitagemuseum.org/wps/portal/hermitage/news/news-item/news/1999\\_2013/hm11\\_1\\_93/?lng=](https://www.hermitagemuseum.org/wps/portal/hermitage/news/news-item/news/1999_2013/hm11_1_93/?lng=) (Accessed 1 July 2021).

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.elysee.fr/emmanuel-macron/2017/11/28/emmanuel-macrons-speech-at-the-university-of-ouagadougou.en> (Accessed 1 July 2021).

<sup>13</sup> <https://news.artnet.com/art-world/french-restitution-policy-macron-1399429> (Accessed 1 July 2021).

year later, in 2019, the New York Times reported that little additional progress had been made – France returned only one object that has been looted during the colonial era to Senegal.<sup>14</sup>

After President Macron’s announcement, I also began following the debate. For me, a person from Eastern Europe, born in the Soviet Union and thus ‘escaped’ imperialism and capitalism, such cultural debates always seemed incredibly captivating. Moreover, the discourse of return/restitution also involves notions of justice and redress of injustice. From my personal experience, I know how it is to live in a newly established nation (Latvia), which has tense post-separation relationships with the former occupying power (Russia). Furthermore, I know how culture can be utilized to define a newborn nation or, on the contrary, how depriving someone of their culture can lead to control and submission. Therefore I chose this topic.

In the thesis, I will examine four case studies related to the topic of restitution between the Netherlands and Indonesia. The thesis will tell stories and delve into restitution problems in chronological order - in a timeframe beginning with the formation of Indonesia as a sovereign nation in 1949 and ending in the present day, 2021. I chose four case studies to explore the historical changes. Two of the study cases presented in this thesis are concrete objects - a statue from the Singasari temple (Chapter II) and a dagger of a Javanese Prince (Chapter IV). Another case study is related to a whole collection of a closed museum and attempts of the Netherlands to deaccession it *en bloc* (Chapter III). The final case study (Chapter V) will be devoted to the Dutch policy-making in the past two years and State’s efforts to redress the colonial past.

I will frame the discussion with the help of two academic discourses: the Authorized Heritage Discourse (AHD) and discourse of reactive/proactive attitudes towards restitution.

The AHD notion was proposed by Laurajane Smith in her book *Uses of Heritage*, 2006. Smith’s core argument is that ‘there is a hegemonic ‘authorized heritage discourse’, which is reliant on the power/knowledge claims of technical and aesthetic experts, and institutionalized in state cultural agencies and amenity societies.’<sup>15</sup> The above mentioned DIVUM is a great example of the AHD in action, and the Congolese activist represents the ‘non-expert’ voices of the subaltern.

The second framework – reactive/proactive attitude – comes from a 2012 book by Jos van Beurden *The Return of Cultural and Historical Treasures: The*

---

<sup>14</sup><https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/22/arts/design/restitution-france-africa.html> (Accessed 1 July 2021)

<sup>15</sup>Smith, *Uses of Heritage*, 11.

*Case of the Netherlands*. In the book, Beurden examines all the return (institutional and private) cases from the Netherlands to Indonesia. In 2007, Stefan Engelsman, a former director of Museum Volkenkunde in Leiden (1992-2012) stated in an email interview to Beurden: 'We are reactive. Others have to submit a request.'<sup>16</sup> I would like to explore whether and how this attitude has changed.

Through my research, I will try to answer a central question:

How did the AHD change in the time between the independence of Indonesia and the present day?

My main interests lie in observing shifts from post-colonial to decolonial perspectives, from reactive to proactive attitudes and from amassing to sharing power/knowledge.

---

<sup>16</sup>Jos van Beurden, *The Return of Cultural and Historical Treasures: The Case of the Netherlands*. (Utrecht: KIT Publishers, 2012), 52.

**Figure 1** | Prajnaparamita statue, the goddess of transcendental wisdom. Collection of the National Museum, Indonesia. Inventory number 1403/1387.





## CHAPTER II | THE PRAJNAPARAMITA STATUE

Prajnaparamita is a Buddhist goddess of transcendental, highest wisdom. The goddess is depicted seated in *padmasana* (the cross-legged position) on a lotus throne. Her hands are raised to her chest in the *dharmacakra mudra* – the gesture of the Turning of the Wheel of the Law.<sup>17</sup> The goddess is adorned with rich and intricate jewellery, and her throne is finely decorated as well. The facial expression of the Prajnaparamita is profoundly meditative and tranquil, with her eyes half-shut and the gaze turned inwards. This statue is considered the masterpiece of Hindu-Buddhist art – a former director of Museum Volkenkunde, Pieter Pott, compared it to the Mona Lisa.<sup>18</sup>

### Pre-return

In the art zeitgeist of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Javanese stone sculptures took a prominent position. They were considered 'to have the aesthetic and cultural value which met Western standards and taste for inclusion in the category from the 'civilized' world.'<sup>19</sup> The biography of Prajnaparamita as a contested art object began in 1818 when the statue was found near the ruins of the 13<sup>th</sup> century Singasari temple in Malang, East Java, by the D. Monnereau, a Dutch colonial officer. The statue was given to the Royal Batavian Society of Arts and Sciences (which after the independence will become the National Museum of Indonesia). Based on the instruction of Professor C.G.C. Reinward, it was shipped to the Netherlands in 1822.<sup>20</sup> Upon its arrival, Prajnaparamita first became part of the collection of the National Museum of Antiquities (Rijksmuseum van Oudheden) in Leiden in 1823.<sup>21</sup> Subsequently, the statue was transferred to Museum Volkenkunde in Leiden in 1903.<sup>22</sup>

---

<sup>17</sup>Wieske Sapardan, „The Return of Cultural Property and National Identity in Post-Colonial Indonesia.” in *Returning Southeast Asia's past: objects, museums, and restitution*, eds., Louise Tythacott and Panggah Ardiyansyah (Singapore: NUS Press, 2021), 215.

<sup>18</sup>Jos van Beurden, *Treasures in Trusted Hands: Negotiating the Future of Colonial Cultural Objects* (Leiden: Sidestone Press, 2017), 146.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 217.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 215.

<sup>21</sup>Cynthia Scott, "Renewing the 'Special Relationship' and Rethinking the Return of Cultural Property: The Indonesia, 1949-79." *Journal of Contemporary History* 52, no. 3 (2017): 654.

<sup>22</sup> Sapardan, „The Return of Cultural Property,” 217.

## Return

The prized statue remained exhibited at Museum Volkenkunde until its return to Indonesia in 1978. The prelude before the return lasted for almost 30 years due to political tensions between the former colonizer, the Netherlands, and the newly emerged nation - Indonesia. Indonesia declared itself independent in 1945. After four years, on December 27, 1949, it was officially recognized by the Netherlands.<sup>23</sup> Since the formation of the new nation, the bilateral negotiations regarding the return of art and cultural objects between The Netherlands and Indonesia began. From the start, the negotiations were strained - Sukarno (1901-1970), the first President of Indonesia, saw the time of the Dutch rule as the 'dark colonial period' in between the 'glorious past' of Shrivijaya and Majapahit kingdoms and the 'promising future' coming for all Indonesians.<sup>24</sup> Therefore, Sukarno's presidency (1945-1967) is best characterized by his politics of 'radical anti-Dutch economic and cultural decolonization under the slogans, 'Nasionalisasi' and 'Indonesianisasi'', which severely interrupted the Dutch presence in Indonesia.<sup>25</sup> In addition, the Dutch military actions between 1945 and 1949 added to already tense and difficult relations.

In 1949 United Nations sponsored the Round Table Conference (RTC), where the independence of Indonesia was recognized by the Netherlands. During the conference, RTC sub-committee drafted a Cultural Agreement. Article 19 of the draft discussed the return of tainted objects and the possibility of exchanging objects of cultural and historical value.<sup>26</sup> At that time, Indonesia did not pursue this issue, and the Cultural Agreement of 1949 quietly died.<sup>27</sup>

One of the main tension points between the two countries was the control and unwillingness of the Netherlands to let go of Papua. When in 1962 the Netherlands finally 'handed over' Papua to the UN, which, in turn, passed it to Indonesia, the room for new negotiations about cultural relations was opened.<sup>28</sup> In 1968, under the new President Suharto (1921-2008), Indonesia and the Netherlands signed a Cultural Agreement on Science, Culture and Arts.<sup>29</sup> Unlike his predecessor, the new President was of a friendlier disposition towards the Dutch, which led to further improvement of the cultural relationships.

---

<sup>23</sup> Beurden, *Treasures in Trusted Hands*, 125.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Scott, "Renewing the 'Special Relationship'," 653.

<sup>26</sup> Beurden, *Treasures in Trusted Hands*, 127.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Beurden, *Treasures in Trusted Hands*, 129.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 131.

Since the Cultural Agreement was signed, Indonesians conducted 'surprise searches'<sup>30</sup> for missing cultural treasures in the Netherlands. In the 1970's there were two incognito visits by the Indonesian officials to the Dutch museums to find valuable cultural treasures that would be eligible for return. First such visit was conducted in 1970 by the Military Attaché of the Indonesian embassy of The Hague to the museums in Leiden and Arnhem.<sup>31</sup> Second took place in 1974 by Indonesian representatives. These searches resulted in a list of ten thousand claimable objects.<sup>32</sup> After the searches, Indonesia proposed that both countries set up a team of experts to further deal with the matters of return<sup>33</sup>. In 1975 these teams agreed upon 'Joint Recommendations by the Dutch and Indonesian Teams of Experts, Concerning Cultural Cooperation in the Field of Museums and Archives Including Transfer of Objects'.<sup>34</sup> In 1977 and 1978, the recommendation led to several significant returns from the Netherlands to Indonesia: half of the Lombok treasure from Rijksmuseum, some of the Prince Diponegoro's regalia from Bronbeek Museum, and the statue of Prajnaparamita from Museum Volkenkunde.<sup>35</sup>

Amongst 1970's returns, the Prajnaparamita statue was the most sought after due to its acclaimed aesthetical values.<sup>36</sup> Pieter Pott, the director of Museum Volkenkunde at the time of the return, ordered four plaster casts. For him, the departure of Prajnaparamita was an emotional event because he admired the artistry of the statue and objected to the return as he saw no legal grounds for the claim.<sup>37</sup> Thus, the four copies were referred to as 'the four tears of Pott' by a later museum director.<sup>38</sup> Despite the reluctance of director Pott, Prajnaparamita was transferred to the government of Indonesia at the occasion of the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the National Museum in Jakarta.<sup>39</sup>

Unfortunately for the claimant country, the other statues, which were also removed from the Singasari temple complex in 1803 and which were a part of the ten thousand object list - Durga Slaying the Demon Mahisa, Shiva as Kala of

---

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 135.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Jos van Beurden, „Returns by the Netherlands to Indonesia in the 2010s and the 1970s.“ in *Returning Southeast Asia's past : Objects, Museums, and Restitution*, eds., Louise Tythacott and Pangah Ardiyansyah (Singapore: NUS Press, 2021), 196.

<sup>34</sup> Beurden, *Treasures in Trusted Hands*, 141.

<sup>35</sup> Beurden, *The Return of Cultural and Historical Treasures*, 53.

<sup>36</sup> Beurden, *Treasures in Trusted Hands*, 140.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid. 146.

<sup>38</sup> Beurden, *The Return of Cultural and Historical Treasures*, 13.

<sup>39</sup> Beurden, *Treasures in Trusted Hands*, 170.

Bhairava, Nandisvara as the Gate Keeper, Nandi and Ganesha<sup>40</sup> (Fig.14) – were not part of the return in 1970's. They are still on display at Museum Volkenkunde, while Prajnaparamita's plaster casts are kept in storage facilities.



**Figure 2** | Director Pieter Pott at the occasion of the transfer of the Prajnaparamita statue to Indonesia with the statue itself. Collection NMVW, the Netherlands. Inventory number RV-12420-2.

### **Post-return**

Since the return to Indonesia, the statue is on display at the National Museum in Jakarta. Prajnaparamita is one of the museum's central pieces, not only due to its aesthetical values but also because it is considered to be one of the nation's most important artworks. Through viewing the statue, museum visitors can associate themselves with the glorious Hindu-Buddhist past of the archipelago and their ancestors.<sup>41</sup> In addition, Indonesia uses the statue for international collaboration and thus strengthening international relationships via cultural diplomacy.<sup>42</sup> In 2003, a 'Shared Cultural Heritage' (SCH) project was launched between Indonesia and the Netherlands.<sup>43</sup> The program focused on exchanging information about the collections between Museum Volkenkunde in

---

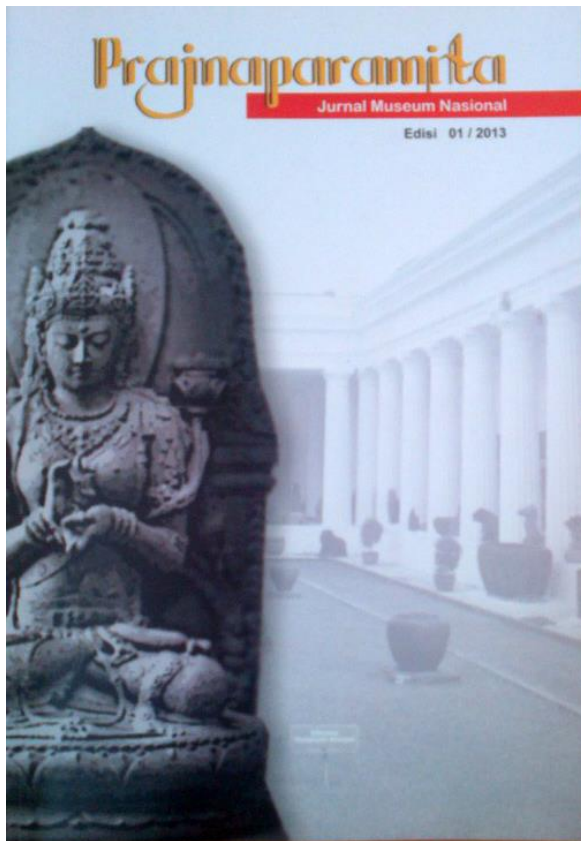
<sup>40</sup> Sapardan,, "The Return of Cultural Property," 227.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 220.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 221.

<sup>43</sup> Cynthia Scott, "Sharing the Divisions of the Colonial Past: an Assessment of the Netherlands-Indonesia Shared Cultural Heritage Project, 2003-2006." *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 20, no. 2 (2014): 182.

Leiden and the National Museum in Jakarta.<sup>44</sup> Within the project, the exhibition 'Indonesia: Discovery of the Past' was first held in 2003 in Jakarta at the National Museum and subsequently in 2005 in the Nieuwe Kerk in Amsterdam. During the exhibitions, the Prajnaparamita statue was on display together with other Singasari temple sculptures from Museum Volkenkunde.<sup>45</sup> In Scott's opinion, such exhibitions are 'efforts by European governments to advance the idea of sharing the material heritage of the colonial past in ways that diminish diplomatic conflict and forestall the question of return.'<sup>46</sup> Nevertheless, the Indonesian side also benefited because through amassing the knowledge about the objects, stronger claims of restitution can be made.



**Figure 3** | In 2013 the National Museum in Jakarta published the first edition of the museum journal entitled *Prajnaparamita*, the same as the masterpiece of its collection.

---

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Sapardan,, "The Return of Cultural Property," 222.

<sup>46</sup> Scott, "Sharing the Divisions," 182.



**Figure 4** | Object from the former Museum Nusantara collection - an arrow stand from Cirebon, Java. Photo by Arend Velsink.

## CHAPTER III | THE COLLECTION OF MUSEUM NUSANTARA

### The life of the collection

Museum Nusantara in Delft opened its doors in 1911. However, the history of the collection of the museum stretches behind this date. In 1864 municipality of Delft established a school for educating civil servants for the Netherlands East Indies - the Institution of Education in Linguistics, Geography and Ethnology of the Netherlands Indies (*Instelling van Onderwijs in de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indie*), generally shortened to Indies Institution (*Indische Instelling*). The patron of this school was Prince William, the later King William III.<sup>47</sup>

Already the Institution's first director, Professor Salomo Keijzer (1823-1868), began collecting objects from the Dutch Indies that could be used for educational purposes as visual aids to make students familiar with their upcoming environment. Those were mainly ethnographic objects of daily use by the native people of the East Indies. Later on, the collection of the Indies Institution transformed into the collection of Museum Nusantara. There is a following prologue to the 1888 catalogue of the 'Ethnological Collection' of the Institution:

'Since the year 1864, when the Institution was founded, efforts have been made to collect objects connected with the Dutch colonies in the East, mainly for the purpose of education in geography and ethnography. [...] This collection was established, partly from gifts by teachers and former students of the School and by other interested people, mainly civil servants; partly (the majority) from objects acquired through the Government after exhibitions in Paris (1878), Berlin (1880) and Amsterdam (1883).'<sup>48</sup>

At first, the collection of the Indies Institution was housed in the building of the Institution itself, which was located on the Oude Delft 69 from 1872 until 1901. However, as the collection grew, especially after rich donations from the World Exhibition in Amsterdam, it needed more space because it could fit no more in a designated room and the attic of the building.<sup>49</sup> In 1893 two special

---

<sup>47</sup> J.L.W. van Leur, „Treasures of Nusantara: the Ethnological Collections of the city of Delft.” in *Treasure Hunting?: Collectors and Collections of Indonesian Artefacts*, eds., Reimar Schefold and Han F. Vermeulen (Leiden: CNWS Universiteit Leiden, 2002), 129; 132.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 133.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 134.

rooms were furnished as a museum to show the importance of the collection and even then a large part of the collection had to remain in the attic.



**Figure 5** | View of the International Colonial and Export Trade Exhibition held on the Museumplein in Amsterdam, from May 1 to October 1, 1883. Collection Rijksmuseum, the Netherlands. Inventory number RP-P-OB-89.774.

The Indies Institution existed for 36 years and educated a considerable amount of civil servants until its closure in 1900. It became ‘a victim of its own success’, van Leur writes.<sup>50</sup> While plenty of people wanted to get a position as civil servant, the amount needed was limited. For instance, from 1885 to 1897, the number of civil servants sent out has fallen from 25 to 10, and in 1900 it was announced that no civil servants were needed, which led to the death of the Indies Institution.<sup>51</sup> At that point, the collection consisting of over 5000 ethnographical items was transferred to the Delft municipality.

Only in 1909 the municipality decided to exhibit the collection again, and in 1911 the Ethnographic Museum opened in one of the rooms of Prinsenhof building. Same as in the times of the Institution, the collection had to struggle with housing issues. Until 1977, when the museum was reformed and reopened

<sup>50</sup> Ibid. 135.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 136.



under the 'Museum Nusantara' title, it has changed several locations: from Prinsenhof to a former school building, after that back to Prinsenhof, but to the attic, then from the attic to a building at Oude Delft 175, then to Oude Delft 116 (the attic of a former girls' orphanage *Meisjeshuis*), then back to Prinsenhof in 1964, but on the south side of the St. Agathaplein.<sup>52</sup>

Since 1964 the 'life' of the collection stabilized and improved – it was restored and catalogued, and an important acquisition of the complete gamelan orchestra was made. Under a new curatorship of Rita Wassing-Visser (1972-1987), further improvements were made – the museum was renovated and refurbished, gaining more exhibition space.<sup>53</sup> Since then, it seemed that Museum Nusantara has a solid place amongst other Dutch museums, which also housed ethnographical and ethnological collections. Nevertheless, that was not the case - in 2012 the Delft municipality stopped financing the museum. The municipality concluded that there are no future prospects for the museum due to decreasing numbers of visitors and changing cultural policy priorities.<sup>54</sup> Thus, in 2013 the museum closed its doors.



**Figure 6 |** A Javanese kampong with inhabitants exhibited at the World Exhibition on the Museumplein in Amsterdam, 1883. Collection Rijksmuseum, the Netherlands. Inventory number RP-P-OB-89.751-15.

---

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 137-139.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 140.

<sup>54</sup> Jos van Beurden, *Herplaatsing Collectie Museum Nusantara Delft*. (Delft: Museum Prinsenhof Delft & Stichting NMVW, 2018), 5.

## Deaccessioning of the collection and refused return

The closing of the Museum Nusantara was not the endpoint for its collection but a different turn in the long-written story. At the moment of the closure, the collection comprised more than 40,000 items mainly related to Indonesia: 18,000 objects, 16,000 photos and images, and 8,000 books, magazines and articles.<sup>55</sup> The decision regarding the future of the objects needed to be made quickly, because the municipality of Delft, the owner of the collection, was willing to pay for storage only for one year.<sup>56</sup> Immediately after the closure became known, the museum employees were consulted on how to deaccession the collection. Advices were to transfer to either Wereldmuseum in Rotterdam or Museum Volkenkunde in Leiden. Both museums considered the offer on the condition that the municipality of Delft would pay costs for maintenance and storage of the collection. However, the municipality could not do that. Subsequently, the request to the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sciences was sent. The Ministry concluded that the Indonesian collection in the Netherlands was already large enough. Thus, upon further deliberations, it was decided that the collection should be repatriated to Indonesia, preferably to regional museums which collections were not that rich. Museum Volkenkunde in Leiden was selected as a deaccessioning partner of Museum Nusantara.<sup>57</sup>

Volkenkunde Museum already had cooperative projects with the National Museum in Jakarta, such as 'Shared Cultural Heritage' project in 2003, when the two museums exchanged knowledge about their collections. The possibility of returning objects came up during informal discussions between the two institutions, and the Indonesian side reacted positively. After the return, the National Museum would redistribute the objects between Indonesian regional museums.<sup>58</sup> Nevertheless, the final word in this discussion belonged to the Delft municipality because it was the owner of the Nusantara collection and the most significant financial sponsor in deaccessioning. After further evaluation and consultation with Museum Volkenkunde, the municipality draw the following plan of redistribution of the Nusantara collection. First, part of the collection would remain in Delft and will be incorporated in the collection of the Prinsenhof Museum. Then, objects which are important to the Netherlands, according to LAMO (Leidraad Afstoting Museale Objecten), will be redistributed amongst the

---

<sup>55</sup> Beurden, *Herplaatsing Collectie*, 23.

<sup>56</sup> Beurden, „Returns by the Netherlands,” 191.

<sup>57</sup> Beurden, *Herplaatsing Collectie*, 25-26.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 26.

Dutch museums. Finally, the remaining items will be returned to the national museums of the countries of origin.<sup>59</sup>

In 2015 Director General of Culture, Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia, Kacung Marijan responded positively to such an offer of the Netherlands.<sup>60</sup> The return of 14,000 objects was planned for April 2016.<sup>61</sup> However, after the appointment of a new Director General, Hilmar Farid, the offer was halted. In the official letter, it was said that Indonesia has decided not to accept the Nusantara collection.<sup>62</sup>

The reason behind such a sudden change of mind remained unclear since the governmental note was very brief and did not give further explanations. Most likely, the main reason was that the Dutch institutions were given the opportunity to select the best objects first, and only then the remainders were offered to Indonesia, which offended the pride of Indonesian officials. In March 2016 Hilmar Farid was quoted saying to the Antara news agency: 'We don't want to take home junk. We want articles that have significance here... We will select as needed.'<sup>63</sup> The other reason behind such refusal could be the unexpectedly high repatriation costs that Indonesia would have to pay to transport such a large amount of precious objects.<sup>64</sup> Or there might have been lack of storage.<sup>65</sup>

On 20 May 2021, Hilmar Farid participated in a webinar organized by SOAS Centre of South East Asian Studies entitled *The Politics of Restitution*. In the lecture given by Farid, he clarified why Indonesia refused the *en bloc* collection offer from The Netherlands:

- Even though the Museum Nusantara was closed in 2013, Indonesia was approached with return only in 2015. Namely, it was not a repatriation process or an effort to decolonize a museum, but it was more of a gift from the Netherlands, as Director General phrased it. The Indonesian side

---

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., 27.

<sup>60</sup> <https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2015/10/20/dutch-museum-return-14000-artifacts-ri.html> (Accessed 15 July 2021).

<sup>61</sup> Beurden, *Treasures in Trusted Hands*, 238.

<sup>62</sup> [verreicultureendelft.nl/archief%20nusantara/16-10-09%20tempo-collection%20museum%20nusantara.pdf](http://verreicultureendelft.nl/archief%20nusantara/16-10-09%20tempo-collection%20museum%20nusantara.pdf) (accessed 15 July 2021)

<sup>63</sup> [verreicultureendelft.nl/archief%20nusantara/16-10-09%20tempo-collection%20museum%20nusantara.pdf](http://verreicultureendelft.nl/archief%20nusantara/16-10-09%20tempo-collection%20museum%20nusantara.pdf) (accessed 15 July 2021)

<sup>64</sup> <https://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2016/11/23/schenking-met-gedoe-5400881-a1533313> (Accessed 15 July 2021).

<sup>65</sup> Beurden, „Returns by the Netherlands,” 191.

was neither consulted nor involved in the process. Thus, both sides were 'not standing on equal footing'.

- Little information was provided about the provenance of objects. Moreover, not all the objects held significance to Indonesia.
- Indonesia would have to pay high costs for storage, while the collection was kept in the Netherlands and then for transportation.<sup>66</sup>

## **Partial return 2016-2020**

Despite the unexpected turn of events, the Nusantara collection still had to be deaccessioned. This led to the reassessment of the location and the terms of return. The same project group that came up with the initial deaccessioning plan now approached ethnographic museums elsewhere in Europe and Asia. The enquiries led to transfer to ethnological museums in Gothenburg (36 objects), Vienna (79 objects), Kuching (412 objects), Singapore (151 objects) and the largest part of the collection – 7,744 objects went to Seoul.<sup>67</sup> At the same time, the project group made efforts to re-establish negotiations regarding repatriation to Indonesia. In 2016 a special delegation of the National Museum of Indonesia was sent to the Netherlands to select objects.<sup>68</sup> Thus, 1,500 objects were selected and began their journey back to the country of origin. The transfer symbolically began on 23 November 2016, when Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte handed over a golden Buginese kris from the former Nusantara collection to Indonesian President Joko Widodo.<sup>69</sup> Even though it was Indonesia who 'called the shots' regarding the selection of the objects this time, the gesture of return itself was presented in a positive and 'never before' seen light by the National Museum of World Cultures and other press outlets in the Netherlands.<sup>70</sup>

The Buginese kris finally arrived at the National Museum in Jakarta in August 2020 when it was given to the museum as a gift from the government.<sup>71</sup> The rest of the 1,500 objects also reached their (for now) final destination after

---

<sup>66</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=aOF0tMOHnf4> (38:55-42:26) (Accessed 15 July 2021).

<sup>67</sup> <https://collectie-nusantara.nl/#/query/772f6aaf-56dd-4a76-8067-a42b0690fc46> (Accessed 15 July 2021).

<sup>68</sup> Beurden, „Returns by the Netherlands,” 193.

<sup>69</sup> <https://en.tempco.co/read/822580/dutch-pm-returns-1500-indonesian-kris> (Accessed 15 July 2021).

<sup>70</sup> <http://persberichten.deperslijst.com/48194/persbericht-premier-rutte-overhandigt-gouden-kris-aan-president-indonesie.html> (Accessed 15 July 2021).

<sup>71</sup> <https://www.museumnasional.or.id/museum-naional-terima-keris-bugis-dari-sekretariat-presiden-2906> (Accessed 15 July 2021).

three years – on December 24, 2019.<sup>72</sup> One of the governmental officials called it ‘a very meaningful New Year’s gift’ and added, ‘if other nations value Indonesia’s culture, we should value it even more.’<sup>73</sup>



**Figure 7 |** Dutch PM Mark Rutte hands over a Buginese kris to Indonesian President Joko Widodo. November 2016. Photo by ANP/Jerry Lampen.

**Figure 8 |** Indonesian officials examine one of the 1,500 artifacts returned from Museum Nusantara in March 2020. Photo retrieved from National Museum Instagram account @museum\_nasional\_indonesia



<sup>72</sup> <https://www.museumnasional.or.id/benda-budaya-indonesia-koleksi-eks-museum-nusantara-delft-2500> (Accessed 15 July 2021).

<sup>73</sup> <https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2020/01/07/netherlands-returns-1500-historical-artifacts-to-indonesia.html> (Accessed 15 July 2021).



**Figure 9** | Prince Diponegoro's kris (dagger). Returned to Indonesia in 2020 after being requested to return in 1974. Photo by Doc. SNKI/Brojobuwono.

## CHAPTER IV | THE KRIS OF DIPONEGORO

### The 19th century: the Prince, the Dutch and the kris

Diponegoro (1785-1855) was a prince (*pangeran*, Indonesian) of Java, the eldest son of the sultan of Yogyakarta. Pangeran Diponegoro led a resistance, which resulted in guerrilla warfare against the Dutch imperial power during the Java War. The war lasted from 1825 until the Prince was tricked into defeat by a cunning Lieutenant-General de Kock (1779-1845) in 1830. The general invited Diponegoro to negotiate under a flag of truce. However, despite the promise of a peaceful talk, the Prince was captured, exiled to Sulawesi, and all of Java became the Dutch colony.<sup>74</sup>



**Figure 10** | Raden Saleh, *The Arrest of Prince Diponegoro*, 1857, oil on canvas, 112x179 cm, Palace Collection, Indonesia.

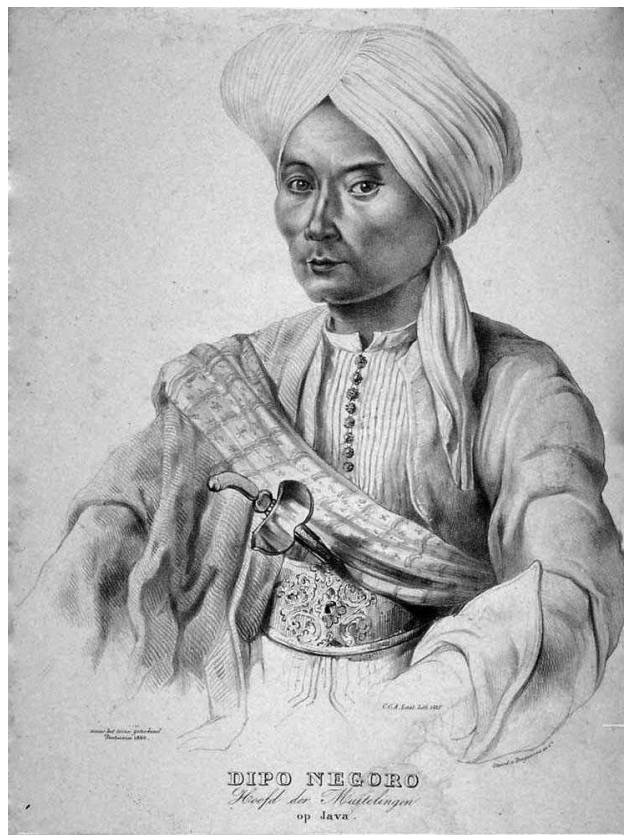
### The dagger

A kris is much more than a weapon for Javanese – it is also a *pusaka*, a treasure inherited from ancestors and endowed with magical powers. Therefore, possessing such an object gives supernatural/spiritual powers to its owner. High-profiled and wealthy people often had more than one kris, so was in the case of

<sup>74</sup> Beurden, *The Return of Cultural and Historical Treasures*, 59.

Pangeran Diponegoro (van Beurden refers to five kris of Diponegoro.)<sup>75</sup> Therefore possessing (or lacking) a kris was equal to possessing or lacking power and blessing from ancestors. For this reason, daggers of local rulers were often taken by the Dutch as war booty. This gesture signified not only the victory/submission but also deprived local rulers of their symbolic power while empowering the colonizer.

The daggers of Diponegoro had the same fate. As van Beurden writes: 'the importance of a kris was common knowledge for Dutch administration in Indonesia. If a local ruler surrendered, he turned in his regalia; usually, his kris was one of the more important ones.'<sup>76</sup> Thus, according to the sources in the form of a certificate of authenticity, the kris of the Prince was donated by a high-ranking military to the Dutch King William I, who exhibited it in the Royal Cabinet of Curiosities.<sup>77</sup>



**Figure 11** | Portrait of Diponegoro after his arrest with a kris. Photo of a portrait drawn by C.C.A. Last. Collection of NMVW, the Netherlands. Inventory number TM-1574-32.

<sup>75</sup> Beurden, „Returns by the Netherlands,” 199.

<sup>76</sup> Beurden, *The Return of Cultural and Historical Treasures*, 58.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, 59.



## The 20th century: independence, negotiations, oblivion

### Indonesia and the Netherlands

Since the independence, characters such as Diponegoro, who lead freedom fights against the colonizers, deeply entered the political imagination of the newly emerged nation. Heroes such as the Prince became pivotal in constructing, maintaining, strengthening and preserving national narratives under Suharto's 'New Order' regime (1966-1998). In 1967 Pangeran Diponegoro was added to the list of the National Heroes of Indonesia by the President. Moreover, streets and universities were named after him, and there is a statute of the Prince nearby the National Monument, commemorating his historical value and importance to the nation.

As was discussed in Chapter II, the 1975 Joint Recommendation between the Netherlands and Indonesia led to several significant returns: the Prajnaparamita statue, half of the Lombok treasure and some of the Prince Diponegoro's regalia. Among the returned objects belonging to the Prince were: red saddle with stirrups, the bridle, the *pajong* (parasol) and a spear.<sup>78</sup> However, the most important and symbolic object belonging to Diponegoro, his kris, was missing.



**Figure 12** | Statue of Prince Diponegoro at the Merdeka Square, Jakarta, Indonesia.  
Photo by CFnphoto. Uwe Aranas

<sup>78</sup> Beurden, *Treasures in Trusted Hands*, 147.

## The missing dagger

After Prince's surrender to Lieutenant-General De Kok, Diponegoro's regalia was delivered to the Netherlands, where his kris became part of the Royal Cabinet of Curiosities. A big part of the Cabinet later ended up in Museum Volkenkunde in Leiden, while the Royal Dutch family kept others.<sup>79</sup> There were several locations where the kris could be – National Museum, Jakarta, Austrian Ethnographic Museum, Vienna and in the Netherlands: Museum Volkenkunde, Rijksmuseum, or Museum Bronbeek. Alternatively, it also could have disappeared into a private collection.<sup>80</sup> However, the kris could be found in none of these locations. The reasons are two-fold; on the one hand, Indonesia did not show too much interest in returning the kris. For instance, in 1984, Pieter Pott, the director of Museum Volkenkunde thought he found the missing kris. However, this opportunity was not followed up by request for a return from the Indonesian side.<sup>81</sup> On the other hand, the Netherlands was not eager to part from this precious object. As former Ambassador Frans van Dongen indicates, in 1985 he suggested returning the kris for the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Indonesia's independence and reached out to director Pott. Van Dongen writes: 'It [the kris] would have a symbolic meaning for the whole of Indonesia and a special one meaning for its President.'<sup>82</sup> He received the answer from Pott that the return was not desirable.<sup>83</sup> Thus, the location and the whereabouts of the kris were shrouded in mystery.

## The 21st century: awareness, return, fake?

In 2008 Indonesian kris was inscribed to the UNESCO intangible heritage list.<sup>84</sup> In addition, the 21<sup>st</sup> century brought a positive change to the kris of Diponegoro and the larger debate of object return/restitution from the lands of former colonizers to the lands of origin.

Under the pressure of academia and press Museum Volkenkunde reopened its search for the precious object in 2017. The kris was primarily found thanks to the enquiries of a Dutch scholar Jos van Beurden PhD. Beurden repeatedly mentioned the kris of Diponegoro throughout his publications and lectures between 2012 and 2017, where he posed questions to the specialists in

---

<sup>79</sup> Beurden, *The Return of Cultural and Historical Treasures*, 59.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> Beurden, „Returns by the Netherlands,” 200.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> <https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/indonesian-kris-00112> (Accessed 15 July 2021).

the field and called to investigate the whereabouts of the kris. In March 2020, in an unexpected announcement of the Minister of Education, Culture and Science (Minister van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap, OCW) Ingrid van Engelshoven, it was declared that Museum Volkenkunde had identified the kris.<sup>85</sup> The kris was finally returned to Indonesia after being lost in the Netherlands for almost half a century.<sup>86</sup>

On both sides of the globe, in the Netherlands and Indonesia, this was a significant event in the field of cultural diplomacy and return/restitution policy. Local as well as international media praised the efforts of the Dutch to locate and return the kris. However, soon after the return, some Indonesian experts raised concerns about the authenticity of the kris.<sup>87</sup> Time will show how this event will evolve and whether the kris that was returned truly belongs to Diponegoro. The biography of the kris takes a new leap.



**Figure 13** | The Netherlands returns Prince Diponegoro's kris to Indonesia in a ceremony attended by Ingrid van Engelshoven, the Dutch Minister of OCW, I Gusti Agung Wesaka Puja, Indonesia's ambassador to the Netherlands, and Stijn Schoonderwoerd, a former director of Museum Volkenkunde, March 2020. Photo by OCW/ Freek van den Bergh.

<sup>85</sup> <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/actueel/nieuws/2020/03/04/nederland-geeft-dolk-van-javaanse-verzetsheld-terug-aan-indonesie> (Accessed 15 July 2021).

<sup>86</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/mar/05/princes-dagger-returned-to-indonesia-after-45-years-lost-in-dutch-archive> (Accessed 15 July 2021).

<sup>87</sup> <https://www.trouw.nl/nieuws/indonesische-experts-nederland-gaf-de-verkeerde-kris-terug-b42b3451/> (Accessed 15 July 2021).



**Figure 14** | The stone statue of Ganesha, the elephant-headed Hindu god, from the Singasari temple. In 1803, Nicolaus Engelhard, governor of the north-eastern corner of Java, 'discovered' the temple and statues, which he subsequently placed in his garden in Semarang. In 1841 the figure became part of the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, after which it was transferred to Museum Volkenkunde in 1903, where it is currently on display. Collection of Museum Volkenkunde, Leiden. Inventory number RV-1403-1681.

## CHAPTER V | RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE NETHERLANDS

In response to restitution debates set in motion by Macron's 2017 speech, in March 2019, NMVW (Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen)<sup>88</sup> published a framework entitled *Return of Cultural Objects: Principles and Process*, which identified criteria based on which claims for cultural heritage objects could be made. As the official press release states, this guidebook:

[...] expresses the overall mission of NMVW to address the long, complex and entangled histories that have resulted in the collections the museum holds. It is part of a larger commitment made by NMVW to the role of collections in national public life; a commitment that includes researching and making publicly accessible its collection; addressing provenance issues arising from colonial appropriations; developing new ethical possibilities for collections; putting contemporary communities on an equal footing as national collections and engaging in dialogue with communities and nations of source, nationally and internationally.<sup>89</sup>

NMVW is a custodian of the national collections, and the Dutch State is their owner. Thus, all decisions regarding the collections require the specific approval of the OCW Minister. The framework developed by NMVW was approved as a pilot policy structure by Ingrid van Engelshoven. Shortly after, in October 2019, the Minister requested Raad voor Cultuur (the Council for Culture) to establish Commissie Nationaal Kader Koloniale Collecties (Commission for National Framework of Colonial Collections) or the Advisory Committee.<sup>90</sup> This Committee, chaired by a lawyer and human rights activist of Surinamese descent - Lilian Gonçalves-Ho Kang, was asked to provide advice on future perspectives on handling colonial collections, especially restitution matters and international collaborations.<sup>91</sup> A year later, in October 2020, the Committee presented its findings entitled *Koloniale Collecties en Erkenning van Onrecht* (*Colonial Collections and a Recognition of Injustice*). The Committee concludes that the Netherlands must assume responsibility for its colonial past by making

---

<sup>88</sup> NMVW or National Museum of World Cultures comprises the Tropenmuseum in Amsterdam, Museum Volkenkunde in Leiden, the Afrika Museum in Berg en Dal, and the Wereldmuseum in Rotterdam.

<sup>89</sup> <https://www.tropenmuseum.nl/en/about-tropenmuseum/return-cultural-objects-principles-and-process> (Accessed 15 July 2021).

<sup>90</sup> <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/kamerstukken/2019/10/15/adviesaanvraag-aan-raad-voor-cultuur-nationaal-kader-koloniale-collecties> (Accessed 15 July 2021).

<sup>91</sup> <https://www.raadvoorcultuur.nl/actueel/nieuws/2019/10/16/commissie-buigt-zich-over-omgang-met-koloniaal-erfgoed> (Accessed 15 July 2021).

recognition and redress of this injustice a key principle in the policy on colonial collections.<sup>92</sup> Moreover, it was recommended that all the objects, which came into possession of the Netherlands illicitly, should be returned unconditionally if the country of origin files a request. In total, the Committee issued 12 recommendations to the Minister of OCW.<sup>93</sup>

The Dutch report grabbed the attention of the international press. Same as the 2018 Sarr-Savoy report, it as well suggested returning a massive amount of cultural treasures to the countries of origin.<sup>94</sup> However, as the example of the French report showed, the advice from experts alone is not enough. To make a change and especially to alter the course of the AHD (Authorized Heritage Discourse), action official institutions' actions are necessary.

Ingrid van Engelshoven, the Dutch Minister of OCW took such an action and adapted the 2020 report into a policy. Thus, the Netherlands became the first country in Europe to approve a central mechanism for repatriating colonial loot.<sup>95</sup> In January 2021 the Minister submitted her *Beleidsvisie collecties uit een koloniale context (Policy-vision for collections with a colonial context)* to the Tweede Kamer or the House of Representatives – the main legislative body of the Dutch government. 'In this policy-vision, I focus on the handling of cultural goods with the realization that they are part of a much broader story of our colonial past', states the Minister.<sup>96</sup> She indicated three steps that need to be taken in order to deal with the colonial collections:

1. Recognizing the injustice done by a former colonizer to a former colonized.
2. Contributing to correcting this historical injustice by returning cultural objects to the land of origin.
3. Avoiding the risk of neo-colonization by cooperation. The Minister admits that correcting the injustice is only possible when there is an equal collaboration on both sides when both voices are heard. Thus, she recommends close cooperation with the governments and experts of the former colonies.<sup>97</sup>

---

<sup>92</sup>Advisory Committee on the National Policy Framework for Colonial Collections, *Colonial Collection and a Recognition of Injustice*. (Den Haag: Raad voor Cultuur, 2020), 29.

<sup>93</sup> Advisory Committee, *Colonial Collection*, 69-71.

<sup>94</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/oct/08/dutch-museums-vow-to-return-art-looted-by-colonialists> (Accessed 15 July 2021).

<sup>95</sup> <https://www.theartnewspaper.com/news/netherlands-takes-lead-in-europe-s-efforts-to-return-of-artefacts-from-former-colonies> (Accessed 15 July 2021).

<sup>96</sup> Ingrid van Engelshoven, *Beleidsvisie Collecties uit een Koloniale Context*. (Den Haag: Ministerie van OCW, Rijksoverheid, 2021), 3.

<sup>97</sup> Engelshoven, *Beleidsvisie Collecties*,4.

The 2019 NMVW framework, the 2020 report and the 2021 governmental policy are not the only undertakings by the Netherlands to address the difficult colonial past. In addition, there are three other significant research projects funded by the Ministry of OCW. The aim of these projects is to discover the provenance of objects in Dutch National collections.

The first project, PPROCE (Pilotproject Provenance Research on Objects of the Colonial Era), runs from 2019 until 2021. It is a collaboration between the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, NMVW and NIOD Institute for War, Holocaust and Genocide Studies. The purpose of this joint project is to develop a set of methods for researching the provenance of colonial collections by doing this provenance research based on a selection of cases from Indonesia and Sri Lanka.<sup>98</sup>

Second project, *Sporen van slavernij en koloniaal verleden (Traces of slavery and colonial past)* is an initiative of Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed (RCE) (The Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands).<sup>99</sup> It began in 2019 and focuses on identification, description and further analysis of objects with linked to the colonial and slavery past. Via this project, the RCE began opening up the national collection under its management for traces of these complicated histories. The aim is to raise awareness and increase transparency. In addition, the RCE is starting the provenance investigation of cultural goods from a colonial context that the RCE manages. The RCE will share the knowledge gained in this process with museums. The project publishes its findings in online magazines<sup>100</sup> and makes its database<sup>101</sup> available to the broader public.

The third project is a joint research project between multiple Dutch cultural and scientific institutions.<sup>102</sup> The project entitled *Pressing Matter: Ownership, Value and the Question of Colonial Heritage in Museums* will run from 2021 to 2025 and is allocated 4.5 million euros.<sup>103</sup> The aim of it is to examine the

---

<sup>98</sup> <https://www.niod.nl/en/projects/pilotproject-provenance-research-objects-colonial-era-pproce> (Accessed 15 July 2021).

<sup>99</sup> <https://www.cultureelerfgoed.nl/actueel/nieuws/2019/12/12/onderzoek-naar-sporen-van-slavernij-en-koloniaalverleden> (Accessed 15 July 2021).

<sup>100</sup> <https://magazines.cultureelerfgoed.nl/terugnaardetoeekomst> (Accessed 15 July 2021).

<sup>101</sup> <https://www.collectienederland.nl/vc/sporen-van-slavernij-en-koloniaal-verleden/> (Accessed 15 July 2021).

<sup>102</sup> Involved institutions: Vrije Universiteit, Universiteit van Amsterdam, Universiteit Utrecht, Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, Universiteit Leiden, NIOD, Stichting Academisch Erfgoed, Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen, Rijksmuseum, Universiteitsmuseum Groningen, Museum Vrolijk, Universiteitsmuseum Utrecht, Museum Bronbeek.

<sup>103</sup> <https://www.theartnewspaper.com/news/netherlands-paves-the-way-for-return-of-colonial-loot> (Accessed 15 July 2021).

social significance of cultural goods from colonial collections.<sup>104</sup> Extensive historical research into objects from a colonial context will be done during the project. In this way, the project offers tools for further provenance research and also in-depth considerations that the assessment committee will make.

In addition to all the initiatives, on 10 March 2020 something unexpected happened – the King of The Netherlands apologized ‘for excessive violence on the part of the Dutch in those years,’<sup>105</sup> implying the four years (1945-1949) when Indonesia fought for its right to become a sovereign nation. The apology was perceived as Breaking News by the news outlets in Indonesia.<sup>106</sup> Recognizing military violence is a major step in healing wounds and strengthening ties between the two countries. However, the question arises – will the Netherlands apologize and acknowledge colonial wrongdoings?

The prospects are rather optimistic. Another Advisory Committee set up by Internal Affairs Minister Kajsa Ollongren published a report in July 2021, where it is stated that the Netherlands must apologize for its slave trade past and recognize that slavery was a crime against humanity.<sup>107</sup> Moreover, the Committee also called on the government to tackle institutional racism in the labour market, the housing market and education system, which was the result of the country’s links to slavery and colonialism.<sup>108</sup> On July 1<sup>st</sup>, which is the day when slavery was abolished in Suriname, the Mayor of Amsterdam formally apologized for city’s role in the slave trade.<sup>109</sup>

---

<sup>104</sup> <https://www.materialculture.nl/en/research/projects/pressing-matter-ownership-value-and-question-colonial-heritage-museums> (Accessed 15 July 2021).

<sup>105</sup> <https://www.royal-house.nl/documents/speeches/2020/03/10/statement-by-king-willem-alexander-at-the-beginning-of-the-state-visit-to-indonesia> (Accessed 15 July 2021).

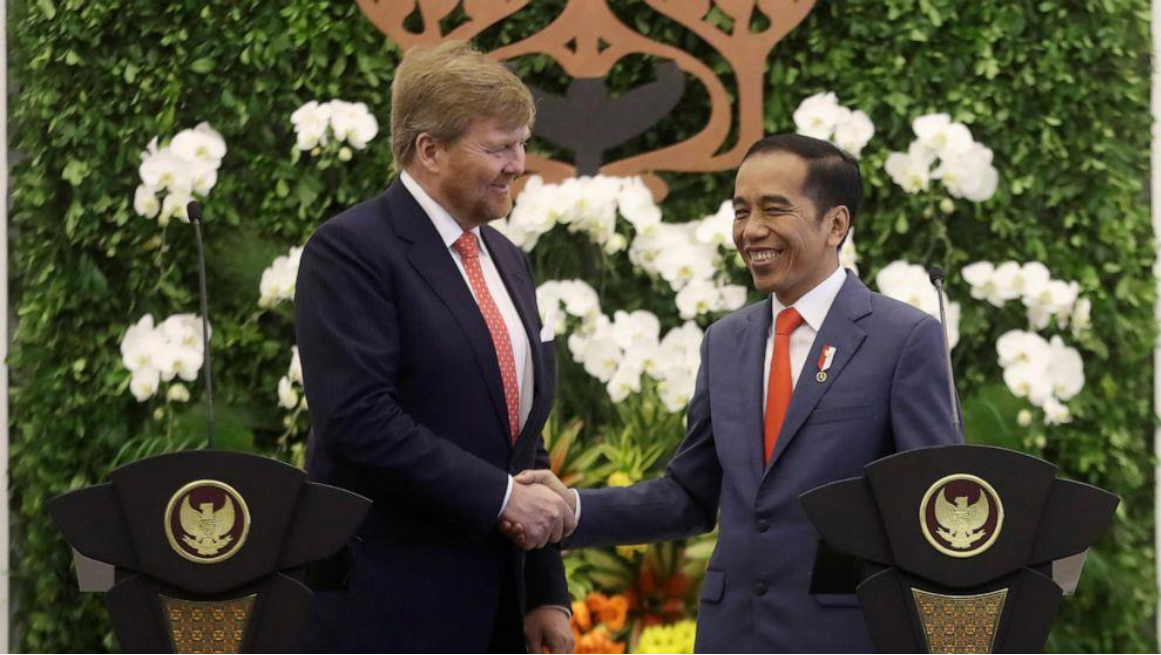
<sup>106</sup> <https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2020/03/10/breaking-dutch-monarch-offers-apology-for-past-excessive-violence.html> (Accessed 15 July 2021).

<sup>107</sup> <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/ministeries/ministerie-van-binnenlandse-zaken-en-koninkrijksrelaties/documenten/rapporten/2021/07/01/adviescollege-dialoggroep-slavernijverleden-presenteert-eindrapport-ketenen-van-het-verleden> (Accessed 15 July 2021).

<sup>108</sup> <https://www.politico.eu/article/netherlands-slave-trade-apology-demand/> (Accessed 15 July 2021).

<sup>109</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-57680209> (Accessed 15 July 2021).





**Figure 15** | King Willem-Alexander of the Netherlands shakes hands with Indonesian President Joko Widodo after the speech at the Presidential Palace in Bogor, Indonesia, March 2020. Photo by AP Photo/Achmad Ibrahim, Pool.

## CHAPTER VI | CONCLUSION

In the framework of the Authorized Heritage Discourse (AHD) the debate of restitution can be considered elitist and, as Smith points out – it ‘promotes a certain set of Western elite cultural values as being universally applicable [...] and undermines alternative and subaltern ideas about ‘heritage’.<sup>110</sup> Therefore, for a long time Western (and colonial) take was the only view that could be reckoned with when it came to collecting practices. However, the aftermaths of two World Wars in the 20<sup>th</sup> century brought about many changes in the way how illicitly acquired and/or looted art was perceived and dealt with. After the plundering and havoc of the Second World War, the Convention on the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict was created in The Hague in 1954. This was the ‘first comprehensive international agreement for the protection of cultural property.’<sup>111</sup> In 1970 the most influential treaty – UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property followed. This Convention, for the first time, provided a legal basis for restitution claims, allowing countries who signed it to request the return of cultural treasures<sup>112</sup> (in 2021, Indonesia has not yet signed it).<sup>113</sup> Thus, the AHD slowly began its transition from having only one perspective (Western), to acknowledging the position of subalterns. This thesis tried to follow the advancement of the AHD between the Netherlands and Indonesia.

The starting point of this transition was discussed in Chapter II on the return of the Prajnaparamita statue in 1978. Prajnaparamita was ‘discovered’ and appropriated by the Dutch during the colonial period when much collecting was unethical by today’s standards. Nevertheless, such activities were not illegal because at that point in time, the AHD was entirely written by the colonial power and opinions of native inhabitants were not reckoned with.

When Indonesia was officially declared independent in 1949, it also had to define itself as a sovereign and, most importantly, equal nation. In the case of

---

<sup>110</sup> Smith, *Uses of Heritage*, 11.

<sup>111</sup> Jeanette Greenfield, *The return of cultural treasures*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 224.

<sup>112</sup> Louise Tythacott and Panggah Ardiyansyah, "Introduction: Collecting and Returning Southeast Asia's Past" in *Returning Southeast Asia's past: objects, museums, and restitution*, eds., Louise Tythacott and Panggah Ardiyansyah (Singapore: NUS Press, 2021), 17.

<sup>113</sup> <https://en.unesco.org/fightrafficking/1970> (Accessed 15 July 2021).

return/restitution it is an obvious power-play: the nation, which holds the most cultural treasures, also possesses the symbolic power. Indeed, after the loss of the colony, the former colonizer was not ready to share the power and give away what was 'theirs' (or at least 'discovered' by them).

In 1974 Indonesia issued the 10,000 object list, which was desirable for return, Prajnaparamita being one of them. In this case, Indonesia and the Netherlands negotiated bilaterally without the involvement of any third party. However, as Scott argues, the Dutch who benefited the most from the publicity created around the negotiations and return.<sup>114</sup> 'The Dutch reputation for cooperation and goodwill'<sup>115</sup> was aided by the praise of UNESCO, who used it as an example of bilateral negotiations. Moreover, both countries were pursuing different aims – Indonesia wanted the return to be a form of redress. In contrast, The Netherlands wanted to increase the presence of experts in the former colony.<sup>116</sup> 'For Dutch officials, the return of the Prajnaparamita was conceived as a measure that would re-validate the Dutch founding of the Batavian Society, and celebrate the Indonesian state as their successor. This move enabled them to define the return as a gesture of goodwill that addressed Indonesian officials' concerns, while also stressing the importance of Dutch collecting activities and institutions established in the colonial past.'<sup>117</sup>

The statue was returned to the National Museum in Jakarta, a successor of the Dutch colonial institution – The Batavian Society of Arts and Sciences. McGregor argues: 'While the museum collections served new purpose in the era of independence, Dutch colonial values continued to penetrate the collection and the meanings made of them in the museum.'<sup>118</sup>

The era of the first returns and negotiations shows how the attitude of the Netherlands was reactive to the Indonesian proactive requests of return. In addition, this attitude was bolstered by the former colonial glory and unwillingness to address colonial injustices.

Chapter III, on the return Nusantara collection, illustrates a gradual shift in the reactive/proactive attitudes. On the one hand, by initiating the return process in 2015, the Netherlands demonstrated a proactive attitude. However, as

---

<sup>114</sup> Scott, "Renewing the 'Special Relationship'," 668.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

<sup>117</sup> Scott, "Renewing the 'Special Relationship'," 663.

<sup>118</sup> Katherine E. McGregor, „Museum and the Transformation from Colonial to Post-colonial institutions in Indonesia: A Case Study of the Indonesian National Museum, formerly the Batavia Msueum." in *Performing Objects: Museums, Material Culture and Performance in Southeast Asia*, ed.: Fiona Kerlogue (London: The Horniman Museum and Gardens, 2004), 18.

was discussed in Chapter III, this return was (same as the case of Prajnaparamita) neither an effort of post-colonial redress nor an attempt to decolonize museums, as Hilmar Farid pointed out in the SOAS organized webinar.<sup>119</sup>

What makes this case significant is the other party involved – Indonesia. For the first time in history, a formerly colonized land refused to accept the return and play by the rules set up by the former colonizer. The power relations began to equalize. Now Indonesia was able to set its requirements and indicate that in the future, it wants to have an equal dialogue and involvement in the restitution matters of the objects that originated in their country.

The Nusantara collection was good food for thought for professionals in the culture/museum sector as well as academics and governmental officials. After yet another gesture of ‘goodwill’ the Netherlands needed to re-evaluate their approach to restitution. Difficulties with deaccessioning the collection lead to a report entitled *Herplaatsing Collectie Voormalig Museum Nusantara Delft 2013 - 2018 Lering en Vragen* completed by Jos van Beurden. Thus, the AHD took an unexpected turn – from protecting what is in the Western museums to redressing colonial injustices.

In the Netherlands, this turn was symbolically marked by the return of the kris of Diponegoro in March 2020, which is discussed in Chapter IV. If in the case of the return of the Nusantara collection, the Netherlands was *proactive on paper*, then in the case of Diponegoro’s kris the attitude shifted to *being truly proactive*, since the urge to investigate and calls for restitution came from within Dutch cultural and academic communities. Ingrid van Engelshoven concludes:

"The kris symbolizes the complexity of the intertwined history of Indonesia and the Netherlands and the different perspectives on it. At the same time, I hope that this kris will also become a symbol for the way in which we will deal with cultural objects with a colonial past. With care, generously and in close collaboration with the people from the land of origin. The return of an object marks the end of a long process of research and consultation. My hope is that it will also mark a new beginning in relations between the Netherlands and its former colonies. With awareness of our past, and a shared, open view of the future."<sup>120</sup>

Chapter V discussed how in a short span of two years, 2019-2021, the AHD in the Netherlands significantly changed its course. Smith criticized the

---

<sup>119</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=aOF0tMOHnf4> (38:55-42:26) (Accessed 15 July 2021).

<sup>120</sup> Engelshoven, *Beleidsvisie Collecties*, 2.

AHD as Western-centric and lacking subaltern expression.<sup>121</sup> From the Dutch governmental as well as cultural initiatives, it becomes clear that the former colonizer is now ready to hear, acknowledge and address subaltern concerns.

However, despite all the positive changes and initiatives on the cultural and governmental levels in the Netherlands, still, there is room for doubt. At the SOAS webinar *Politics of Restitution* in May 2021, Jos van Beurden elaborated: 'There is a change... There seems to be a change in Europe, in the former colonial powers. [...] But the question is: whether this is a trend that only reassures people in the global North or whether it is a tipping point that really changes the relationship between former colonized and former colonizers.' He concluded: 'We will know the answer to this question only in the future. But to deal with the future, we have to understand the past.'<sup>122</sup>

---

<sup>121</sup> Smith, *Uses of Heritage*, 277.

<sup>122</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=aOF0tMOHnf4> (9:20-10:05) (Accessed 15 July 2021).

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Advisory Committee on the National Policy Framework for Colonial Collections. 2020. *Colonial Collection and Recognition of Injustice*. Commissioned Report, Den Haag: Raad voor Cultuur. Available at: <https://www.raadvoorcultuur.nl/documenten/adviezen/2021/01/22/colonial-collection-and-a-recognition-of-injustice>

Adviescollege Dialooggroep Slavernijverleden. (2021). *Ketenen van Verleden*. Rijksoverheid, Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties. Amsterdam: Rijksoverheid Web site. Accessed 15 July 2021. <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/ministeries/ministerie-van-binnenlandse-zaken-en-koninkrijksrelaties/documenten/rapporten/2021/07/01/adviescollege-dialooggroep-slavernijverleden-presenteert-eindrapport-ketenen-van-het-verleden>

Artnet News. (2020, November 19). *A French Court Acquits Four Anti-Colonial Activists Who Removed a Spear From a Museum, Saying the Gesture Counts as Free Speech*. Accessed 1 July 2021. <https://news.artnet.com/art-world/marseille-mwazulu-diyabanza-1924953>

BBC News, 2021. Amsterdam Mayor Apologizes for City's Role in Slave Trade. Accessed 15 July 2021. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-57680209>

Beurden, Jos van; Farid, Hilmar. 2021. *The Politics of Restitution*. Webinar. Moderators: Panggah Ardiyansyah and Seang Sokha. SOAS Centre of South East Asian Studies and SOAS Southeast Asian Art Academic Program. Virtual event, May 20. Accessed 15 July 2021. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=aOF0tMOHnf4>

Beurden, Jos van. 2021. "Returns by the Netherlands to Indonesia in the 2010s and the 1970s." in *Returning Southeast Asia's Past: Objects, Museums, and Restitution*, eds. Louise Tythacott and Panggah Ardiyansyah, 187-212. Singapore: NUS Press.

—. 2018. *Herplaatsing Collectie Voormalig Museum Nusantara Delft 2013 - 2018 Lering en Vragen*. Commissioned Report, Delft: Museum Prinsenhof Delft & Stichting Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen. Available at: <https://www.materialculture.nl/en/research/publications/herplaatsing-collectie-voormalig-museum-nusantara-delft-2013-2018-lering-en>

—. 2012. *The Return of Cultural and Historical Treasures: The Case of the Netherlands*. Utrecht: KIT Publishers.

—. 2017. *Treasures in Trusted Hands: Negotiating the Future of Colonial Cultural Objects*. Leiden: Sidestone Press.

Brassem, Eric. 2020. Indonesische Experts: Nederland Gaf de Verkeerde Kris Terug. Accessed 15 July 2021. <https://www.trouw.nl/nieuws/indonesische-experts-nederland-gaf-de-verkeerde-kris-terug~b42b3451/>

DutchNews.nl. n.d. *Colonial Art Protesters Charged with Attempted Theft of Statue in Court*. Accessed 1 July 2021. <https://www.dutchnews.nl/news/2021/01/colonial-art-protesters-charged-with-attempted-theft-of-statue-in-court/>

Bobiso Media . n.d. En Direct d'Afrika Museum Berg en Dal Hollande (Pays-bas) Recuperation de Notre Patrimoine. Accessed 1 July 2021. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pnj34Cp-UUw>

Engelshoven, Ingrid van. 2019. Afschrift Brief Adviesaanvraag aan Raad voor Cultuur Nationaal Kader Koloniale Collecties. Accessed 1 July 2021. <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/kamerstukken/2019/10/15/adviesaanvraag-aan-raad-voor-cultuur-nationaal-kader-koloniale-collecties>

—. 2021. *Beleidsvisie Collecties uit een Koloniale*. Policy Report, Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap, Rijksoverheid, Den Haag: Ministerie van OCW. Available at: <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/kamerstukken/2021/01/29/rapport-beleidsvisie-collecties-uit-een-koloniale-context>

Greenfield, Jeanette. 2007. *The Return of Cultural Treasures*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

King Willem-Alexander. 2020. Statement by King Willem-Alexander at the Beginning of the State Visit to Indonesia. Speech, Royal House of the Netherlands. Accessed 15 July 2021. <https://www.royal-house.nl/documents/speeches/2020/03/10/statement-by-king-willem-alexander-at-the-beginning-of-the-state-visit-to-indonesia>

Leur, J.L.W. van. 2002. "Treasures of Nusantara: the Ethnological Collections of the City of Delft." in *Treasure Hunting?: Collectors and Collections of Indonesian Artefacts*, eds., Reimar Schefold and Han F. Vermeulen, 129-145.

Leiden: Research School of Asian, African, and Amerindian Studies (CNWS), Universiteit Leiden.

Mcgregor, Katherine E. 2004. "Museum and the Transformation from Colonial to Post-colonial Institutions in Indonesia: A Case Study of the Indonesian National Museum, Formerly the Batavia Museum." in *Performing Objects: Museums, Material Culture and Performance in Southeast Asia*, ed. Fiona Kerlogue, 15-26. London: The Horniman Museum and Gardens.

Museum Nasional Indonesia. 2019. Museum Nasional Terima Benda Budaya Koleksi Eks Museum Nusantara Delft. December 31. Accessed 15 July 2021. <https://www.museumnasional.or.id/benda-budaya-indonesia-koleksi-eks-museum-nusantara-delft-2500>

—. 2020. Museum Nasional Terima Keris Bugis dari Sekretariat Presiden. August 28. Accessed 15 July 2021. <https://www.museumnasional.or.id/museum-naional-terima-keris-bugis-dari-sekretariat-presiden-2906>

Museum Nusantara. n.d. Herplaatsing Collectie Museum Nusantara Delft. Accessed 15 July 2021. <https://collectie-nusantara.nl/#/query/e5bffc07-e1e7-46a2-8966-a8a670d9de73>

New York Times. (2019, November 22). France Vowed to Return Looted Treasures. But Few are Heading Back. Accessed 1 July 2021. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/22/arts/design/restitution-france-africa.html>

Nieuwsbericht Rijksoverheid. 2020. Nederland Geeft Dolk van Javaanse Verzetsheld terug aan Indonesië. March 4. Accessed 15 July 2021. <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/actueel/nieuws/2020/03/04/nederland-geeft-dolk-van-javaanse-verzetsheld-terug-aan-indonesie>

NIOD Institute for War, Holocaust and Genocide Studies. n.d. Pilotproject Provenance Research on Objects of the Colonial Era (PPOCE). Accessed 15 July 2021. <https://www.niod.nl/en/projects/pilotproject-provenance-research-objects-colonial-era-pproce>

NL Times. (2020, September 11). *Activists Held for Taking African Statue from Museum in Colonialism Protest*. Accessed 1 July 2021. <https://nltimes.nl/2020/09/11/activists-held-taking-african-statue-museum-colonialism-protest>



—. 2020, September 11. *Activists Held for Taking African Statue from Museum in Colonialism Protest*. Accessed 1 July 2021. <https://nltimes.nl/2020/09/11/activists-held-taking-african-statue-museum-colonialism-protest>

—. n.d.. *Activist Who Removed Statue from Dutch Museum in Tireless Pursuit of Stolen African* Accessed 1 July 2021. <https://nltimes.nl/2020/09/28/activist-removed-statue-dutch-museum-tireless-pursuit-stolen-african-art>

NMWW Press release. n.d. *Premier Rutte Overhandigt Gouden Kris aan President Indonesië*. Accessed 15 July 2021. <http://persberichten.deperslijst.com/48194/persbericht-premier-rutte-overhandigt-gouden-kris-aan-president-indonesie.html>

NMWW. 2019. *Return of Cultural Objects: Principles and Process*. Framework for. Stichting Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen. Accessed 15 July 2021. <https://www.tropenmuseum.nl/en/about-tropenmuseum/return-cultural-objects-principles-and-process>

Politico. 2021. *The Netherlands Told to Apologize for Slave Trade Pas*. July 1. Accessed 15 July 2021. <https://www.politico.eu/article/netherlands-slave-trade-apology-demand/>

Raad voor Cultuur. 2019. *Commissie Buigt Zich over Omgang met Koloniaal Erfgoed*. October 16. Accessed 15 July 2021. <https://www.raadvoorcultuur.nl/actueel/nieuws/2019/10/16/commissie-buigt-zich-over-omgang-met-koloniaal-erfgoed>

Research Center for Material Culture. n.d. *Pressing Matter: Ownership, Value and the Question of Colonial Heritage in Museums*. Accessed 15 July 2021. <https://www.materialculture.nl/en/research/projects/pressing-matter-ownership-value-and-question-colonial-heritage-museums>

Ribbens, Arjen. 2016. *Schenking met Gedoe*. November 23. Accessed 15 July 2021. <https://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2016/11/23/schenking-met-gedoe-5400881-a1533313>

Rijksdienst voor Cultureel Erfgoed. 2019. *Onderzoek naar Sporen van Slavernij en Koloniaal Verleden*. December 12. Accessed 15 July 2021. <https://www.cultureelerfgoed.nl/actueel/nieuws/2019/12/12/onderzoek-naar-sporen-van-slavernij-en-koloniaalverleden>

— . n.d. Sporen van Slavernij en Koloniaal Verleden in de Rijkscollectie RCE. Accessed 15 July 2021. <https://www.collectienederland.nl/vc/sporen-van-slavernij-en-koloniaal-verleden/>

— . n.d. *Terug Naar de Toekomst*. Accessed 15 July 2021. <https://magazines.cultureelerfgoed.nl/terugnaardetoekomst>

Sapardan, Wieske. 2021. "The Return of Cultural Property and National Identity in Post-Colonial Indonesia." in *Returning Southeast Asia's Past: Objects, Museums, and Restitution*, eds., Louise Tythacott and Panggah Ardiyansyah, 213-234. Singapore: NUS Press.

Scott, Cynthia. 2017. "Renewing the 'Special Relationship' and Rethinking the Return of Cultural Property: The Indonesia, 1949-79." *Journal of Contemporary History* 52, no. 3 (2017): 646-668.

Scott, Cynthia. 2014. "Sharing the Divisions of the Colonial Past: an Assessment of the Netherlands-Indonesia Shared Cultural Heritage Project, 2003-2006." *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 20, no. 2 (2014): 181-194.

Smith, Laurajane. 2006. *Uses of Heritage*. London and New York: Routledge.

Sudarto, Linawati. 2016. "Voortbestaan Nusantara: Archief: Verre Culturen Delft." Verre Culturen Delft. October 9. Accessed 15 July 2021. <https://verreculturendelft.nl/archief%20nusantara/16-10-09%20tempo-collection%20museum%20nusantara.pdf>

The Art Newspaper. 2021. Forging Ahead with Historic Restitution Plans, Dutch Museums will Launch €4.5m Project to Develop a Practical Guide on Colonial Collections. March 10. Accessed 15 July 2021. <https://www.theartnewspaper.com/news/netherlands-paves-the-way-for-return-of-colonial-loot>

— . n.d. *How Recent Anti-racism protests have Pushed a Longstanding Debate About Colonial Looting in Europe* . Accessed 1 July 2021. <https://www.theartnewspaper.com/analysis/demands-to-restitute-artefacts-plundered-from-africa-blm>

— . 2021. Netherlands Takes Lead in Europe's Efforts to Return Artefacts to Former Colonies. February 4. Accessed 15 July 2021.

<https://www.theartnewspaper.com/news/netherlands-takes-lead-in-europe-s-efforts-to-return-of-artefacts-from-former-colonies>

The Guardian. 2020. Dutch Museums Vow to Return Art Looted by Colonialists. October 8. Accessed 15 July 2021.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/oct/08/dutch-museums-vow-to-return-art-looted-by-colonialists>

—. 2020. Prince's Dagger Returned to Indonesia after 45 years Lost in Dutch Archive. March 5. Accessed 15 July 2021.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/mar/05/princes-dagger-returned-to-indonesia-after-45-years-lost-in-dutch-archive>

The Jakarta Post. 2020. BREAKING: Dutch Monarch Offers Apology for Past 'excessive violence'. March 10. Accessed 15 July 2021.

<https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2020/03/10/breaking-dutch-monarch-offers-apology-for-past-excessive-violence.html>

—. 2015. Dutch Museum to Return 14,000 Artifacts to RI. October 20. Accessed 15 July 2021.

<https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2015/10/20/dutch-museum-return-14000-artifacts-ri.html>

—. 2020. Netherlands Returns 1,500 historical Artifacts to Indonesia. January 7. Accessed 15 July 2021.

<https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2020/01/07/netherlands-returns-1500-historical-artifacts-to-indonesia.html>

Tythacott, Louise, and Panggah Ardiyansyah. 2021. "Introduction: Collecting and Returning Southeast Asia's Past." in *Returning Southeast Asia's Past: Objects, Museums, and Restitution*, eds., Louise Tythacott and Panggah Ardiyansyah, 1-41. Singapore: NUS Press.

UNESCO. n.d. Illicit Trafficking. Accessed 15 July 2021.

<https://en.unesco.org/fightrafficking/1970>

—. n.d. Intangible Cultural Heritage. Indonesian Kris. Accessed 15 July 2021. <https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/indonesian-kris-00112>

Volkskrant. (2020, September 30). *Mwazulu, de Robin Hood van Roofkunst uit Afrika, Geeft de Strijd Tegen de Koloniale Staten niet op*. Accessed 1

July 2021. <https://www.volkskrant.nl/nieuws-achtergrond/mwazulu-de-robinhood-van-roofkunst-uit-afrika-geeft-de-strijd-tegen-de-koloniale-staten-niet-op-b6e37ef5/>